



Instructor Training (Outdoor recreation)

A blueprint for quality training

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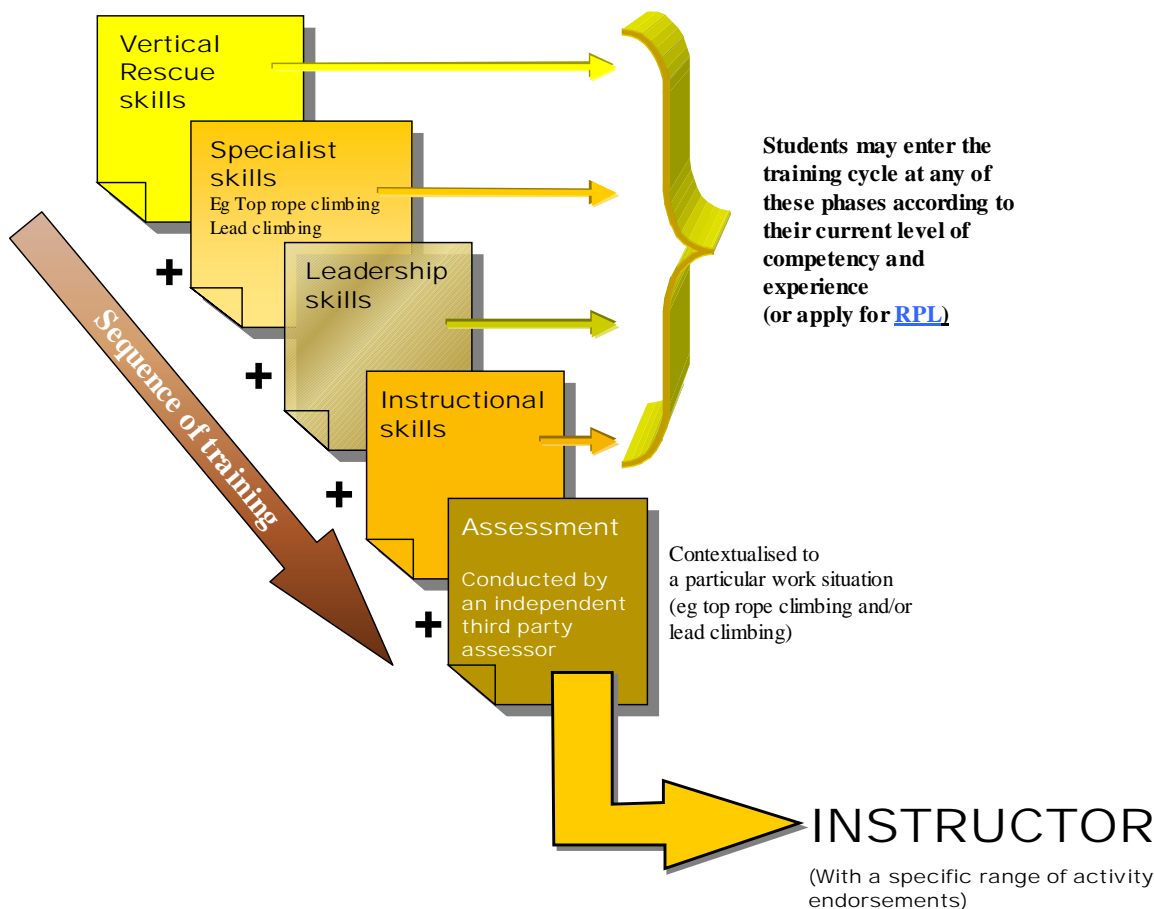
Instructor training is designed to prepare trainees for the rigors of teaching others at height within a specialist activity context (eg abseiling and/or climbing). Training is intensive and places high demands on trainee instructors. Trainee instructors will be delivering formal lessons in a classroom environment and the vocational outcomes require trainees to be effective communicators. Successful trainees will be able to seek employment as an instructor and deliver formal training and assessment. Where partnering arrangements have been made through an RTO, nationally recognised statements of attainment can also be issued to persons who complete their training with a qualified instructor.

In the PACI system of education, instructor training consists of five (5) distinct phases:

- Phase 1 = Vertical rescue training 5 days
- Phase 2 = Specialist skills training Varies (depends on specialist skills sought)
- Phase 3 = Leadership/guide training 5-7 days (depending on endorsements)
- Phase 4 = Instructional skills training 5-7 days (depends on endorsements)
- Phase 5 = Assessment 2-3 days (depends on number of candidates)

The time frames given are the nominal duration and may vary according to the complexity of endorsements (ie activity specialisations) sought. Local weather and difficulty of access to training sites may also affect the nominal duration.

Competency must be achieved at each phase before progressing to the next phase.

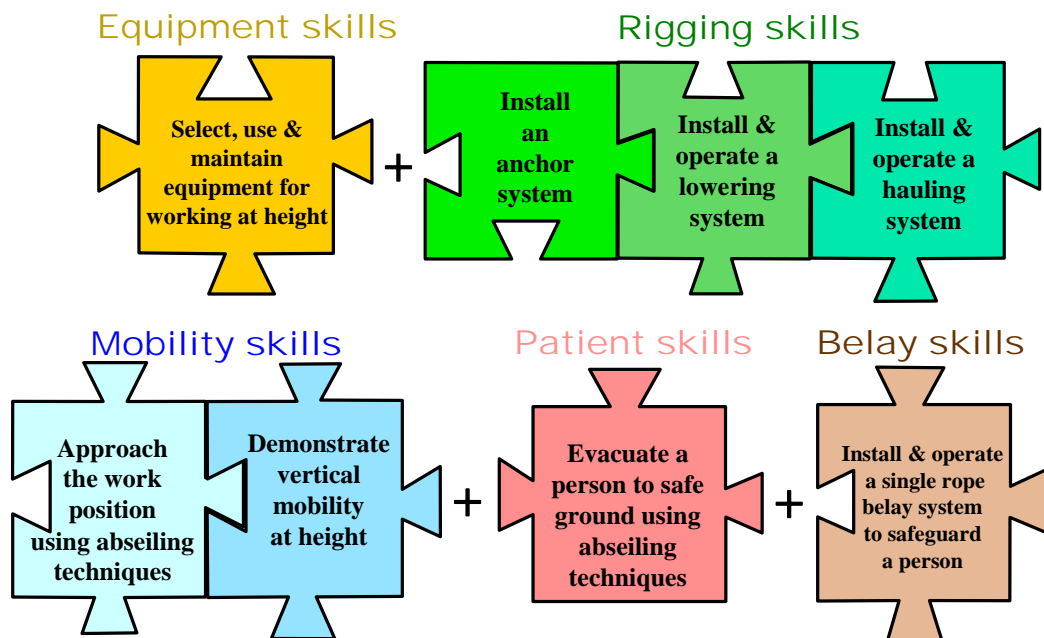


Phase 1: Vertical rescue training (5 nominal days)

Rescue training lays a solid foundation of core roping skills and is a mandatory requirement for any person intending on supervising and/or instructing others. At this early stage of the instructor training cycle, trainees apply their rescue skills within a scenario-based context that is relevant to their needs and future aspirations. Trainees will generally be applying their rescue skills within an indoor, outdoor, abseiling, climbing or high ropes context.

Whichever context is identified, training is generally modelled on the following format with specific skills tailored to suit the required context and environment. The duration of training will also be dependent on the context in which skills are to be applied.

All PACI vertical rescue training (within an outdoor recreation context) includes the following skills:



The PACI instructor will pitch training within a context that is realistic and relevant to the trainees needs. For example, trainees with a strong lead climbing focus will typically build anchors using removable protection devices (ie wired nuts, cams etc) and work with what they would normally carry on their harness. Carabiners will normally be alloy and non-locking with only a few locking types.

Trainees with an abseiling focus will typically use trees, boulders and pre-installed bolts (where they exist) to build their anchor systems. Carabiners will normally be locking and there may be a mix of steel and alloy types.

Typical training plan:

- Day 1: Equipment, knots, anchor systems, abseiling skills, improvised descending systems, descending with a heavy pack.
- Day 2: Vertical mobility skills (ascending, change-overs, knot bypass), retrievable abseil system, using an improvised harness.
- Day 3: Assisted abseil, lowering systems, suspended patient extraction, mechanical advantage
- Day 4: Mechanical advantage systems (continued), accident scenario practice.
- Day 5: Revision of skills, final assessment (accident scenario requiring a range of skills).

Phase 2: Specialist skills training (nominal duration varies)

Competency in vertical rescue skills must be demonstrated before beginning training at this level.

Specialist skills training occurs within a particular activity context as identified through careful questioning of the trainee. For example, some trainees may not be interested in climbing or in particular – lead climbing. Others may be interested only in indoor (artificial wall) climbing, while some trainees may be seeking training within a high ropes context only.

Trainees determine which activity specialisations are required and then training is tailored to meet those needs. Generally, training will be either abseiling or climbing related.

Abseiling skills include – multi-pitch abseiling, vertical canyoning, high ropes course, etc

Abseiling training is conducted in the following sequence:

- Abseiling (single-pitch) – embedded as part of vertical rescue training
- Abseiling (multi-pitch) – 2 days nominal
- Canyoning - vertical (multi-pitch) – 2 days nominal

Increasing complexity

Note: Canyoning (multi-pitch) may be conducted as a standalone activity in lieu of the multi-pitch abseiling course. The skills are similar but canyons may include the presence of water and more complex egress once the bottom has been reached.

Climbing skills include – top rope climbing, lead climbing (single-pitch), lead climbing (multi-pitch), big wall / aid climbing, ice climbing, etc

Climbing training is conducted in the following sequence:

- Top rope climbing – 2 days nominal
- Lead climbing (single-pitch) – 2 to 3 days nominal
- Lead climbing (multi-pitch) – 2 to 3 days nominal
- Big wall / aid climbing – 3 days nominal

Increasing complexity

Ice climbing is generally conducted after competency has been achieved in vertical rescue & lead climbing (single-pitch) skills. Ice climbing generally involves some rock climbing although special plastic or heavy duty leather boots are normally worn with crampons (spikes). A high degree of self-reliance is required, particularly the ability to retreat from a position high on a mountain and in potentially adverse weather conditions. Ice climbing is obviously only conducted in specific areas of Australia (eg Blue lake near Mt Kosciusko) and in winter/early spring.

Typical training plan for top rope climbing:

Day 1: Review of exams, equipment for rock climbing, abseiling skills (if not previously learnt), interpreting a guide-book, locating a route, identifying rock features, setting up anchor systems for a bottom belay system, belay skills, safety calls, climbing skills, setting up anchors for a top belay system.

Day 2: Setting up anchors for a top belay system (continued), belay from the top of a route, accurate positioning, ability to ‘escape the belay’, implementing an assisted hoist, further climbing practice.

Typical training plan for lead climbing (multipitch):

Notes:

- 1) Routes will typically be 2-4 pitches in length and at a grade that is suited to ability of the trainee. Difficulty in accessing the route and exiting once completed are factored in to overall scope of training. Routes that require abseil descent (ie not possible to walk off) are normally selected as they offer valuable opportunities to practice skills, and create an atmosphere of commitment.
- 2) Maximum student-to-instructor ratio of 3:1 is a practical limit – with 2:1 offering the ideal ratio. Time constraints and ease of control are important considerations during training. Multipitch routes typically require a significant time commitment for each route – particularly if trainees do not have a significant depth and breadth of underpinning experience.
- 3) The duration of training will vary from region to region and according to the difficulty of access to routes. Time of year and resulting weather patterns will also affect the scheduling of training. Rain will normally mean postponement of climbing due to safety concerns.

Day 1: AM - Review of exams, selecting and carrying equipment for lead climbing, ground training rehearsal of double rope technique, ground training rehearsal of setting up belay and managing ropes, selecting a route and assessing options for retreat

PM - Attempt first multipitch lead climb – commence by 1230pm

Day 2: Climbing practice – actual multipitch route (using double ropes)

Day 3: AM - Climbing practice – actual multipitch route (2-3 pitches at grade suited to ability of trainee)

PM – Assessment

The specialist skills phase of the instructor learning cycle must be carefully conducted to ensure that trainees are exposed to the broadest possible range of techniques to build a ‘knowledge-base’ from which trainees can draw from in later phases of their training.

Trainees who have had previous abseiling and/or climbing experience will find the transition to leadership training easier as they usually have a greater depth and breadth of experience to draw upon.

Unless a solid base of specialist skills has been acquired, the transition to leadership/guides training will be more difficult, and may have a compounding effect when the next transition to instructor-level training occurs.

As with all specialist roping skills, an ongoing commitment must be made to maintain those skills through regular practice. Long periods of inactivity will lead to a deterioration of skill proficiency, which in turn could result in increased risks – particularly to the public whose safety and enjoyment are dependent on the ability of the guide/instructor.

Phase 3: Leadership / Guide training (nominal duration varies)

Competency in vertical rescue and chosen specialist skills must be demonstrated before beginning training at this level.

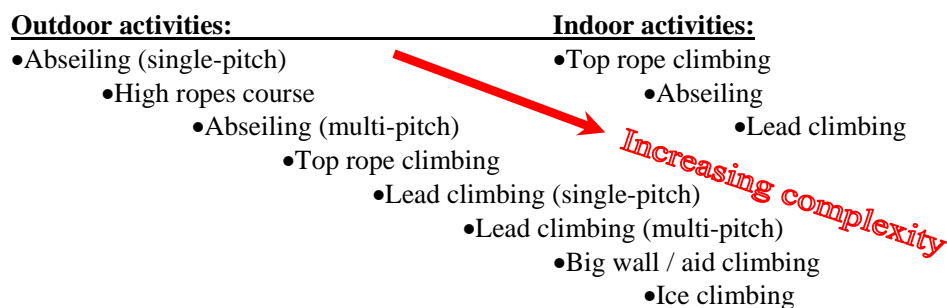
Building on this prerequisite experience, trainees learn how to prepare detailed work plans, conduct risk assessments and lead others in specialist activities that involve exposure to falls from height. The course is concerned with the *application* of skills to ensure that the planned activity is safely and consistently achieved.

Training at this level constitutes a departure from pure recreational adventures where the focus is narrowed to a personal level (and perhaps one other partner in the case of rescue). Leadership training now places the trainee guide in the drivers seat with clear duties and responsibilities toward others. The focus is now directed at *managing* others on a recreational activity at height all within defined time constraints. Trainees will be responsible for ensuring that those persons under their care, have an enjoyable and as far as is reasonably possible – a safe experience.

Trainees also learn how to implement and monitor OH&S procedures in consideration of identified hazards and risks in the workplace – the activity site in effect is a *workplace*.

All training is conducted within an activity specific context – eg guiding a small party on a multi-pitch lead climb or guiding a small party on a multi-pitch abseil descent or perhaps conducting a high ropes session for a group of participants.

Activities are arranged within a hierarchy of complexity as follows:



It is assumed that indoor activities are less complex and involve exposure to inherently less risk than the equivalent outdoor activity. For example, lead climbing outdoors requires a higher level of skill and knowledge than lead climbing indoors with bolts. It is also assumed that a guide with outdoor lead climbing endorsements can also conduct top rope climbing and abseiling activities.

During leadership/guides training, the trainee will take charge of a group of ‘clients’ and guide them through an activity specific context (eg multi-pitch lead climbing). The clients may be real or role-played, depending on the circumstances of the business operator conducting the training. It may not be practicable to wait for real customers to book training as this may not coincide with the time constraints of the trainees undertaking their leadership training. Role-played ‘clients’ can easily be arranged and carefully briefed to re-create a number of simulated ‘problems’ which the ‘guide’ must respond to.

Leadership/guides training will vary from 5-7 nominal days in duration – the exact time frame will be predicted once the trainees needs are identified. As a general guide, the following durations may serve as a useful benchmark:

For outdoor activities:

Abseiling (single-pitch endorsements)	= 4 nominal days
High ropes course activities	= 3 nominal days

Abseiling (multi-pitch endorsements)	= 5 nominal days
Top rope climbing	= 5 nominal days
Lead climbing (single-pitch endorsements)	= 6 nominal days
Lead climbing (multi-pitch endorsements)	= 7 nominal days

These durations will vary according to the locality/region in which training takes place, the number of trainees booked on the course and local access restrictions/difficulties (eg national parks regulations). The nominal durations include the final assessment activity.

Numeracy/literacy requirements:

Speak, read and understand the English language

Trainees must have literacy and numeracy skills at a level sufficient to instruct others. This means that trainees must:

- be able to write essays without introducing significant grammatical or spelling errors; and
- be able to read, analyse and interpret technical documents such as standards published by Standards Australia, OH&S legislation published by the government; and
- be able to understand questions asked by others and respond in English that is reasonably clear and of sufficient content to satisfy the original question asked.

Fit and healthy for working at height within the chosen specialist activities

Typical training plan (for top rope climbing endorsements)

Day 1: PACI procedures for working at height – covers OHS requirements, legal liability for actions, admin requirements, planning & risk assessment for planned activities at height, review of exams.

Day 2: Practical ‘how to’ setup & conduct abseiling activities & top rope climbing activities. Techniques on safeguarding participants while they undertake abseiling & top rope climbing.

Day 3: Guiding ‘clients’ on top rope climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems

Day 4: Guiding ‘clients’ on top rope climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems

Day 5: Assessment

Typical training plan (for multipitch lead climbing endorsements)

Note: At this level, it is assumed that the leader/guide can also conduct abseiling & top rope climbing activities.

Day 1: PACI procedures for working at height – covers OHS requirements, legal liability for actions, admin requirements, planning & risk assessment for planned activities at height, review of exams.

Day 2: Practical ‘how to’ setup & conduct abseiling activities & top rope climbing activities. Techniques on safeguarding participants while they undertake abseiling & top rope climbing.

Day 3: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems

Day 4: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems

Day 5: Guiding ‘clients’ on multipitch lead climbs – scenario-based and includes response to problems

Day 6: Further guiding practice then final assessment

Day 7: Assessment (continued)

Phase 4: Instructor training (nominal duration varies)

Competency in vertical rescue, chosen specialist skills and leadership skills must be demonstrated before beginning training at this level.

The instructor training phase is designed to develop the trainees *teaching skills* under the guidance and coaching of a qualified *Instructor Trainer*.

Underlying competency and experience is expected in the trainees chosen specialist activities (ie endorsement areas). Effort is focussed on *how to teach* a particular set of skills – not learning them at first instance. The skill should already have been learnt and mastered by the trainee before attempting this phase of training.

The PACI approach is segment skills into three (3) distinct yet related instances of learning:

- 1) Theory / classroom (knowledge related to the skill(s) is learned)
- 2) Ground training (the skill(s) are practiced in a safe environment – ie level ground)
- 3) Height training (the skill is practiced at height)

Trainee ‘instructors’ learn how to segment their training into these three categories. For example, a lesson on mechanical advantage (M.A.) is first taught in a classroom environment. Next, ‘students’ practice building M.A. systems on the ground. Finally, the ‘students’ practice applying their M.A. skills at height within a realistic context. It is the instructors job to make sure that learning takes place across each of the segments within a realistic and relevant context.

Training also includes procedures on how to interpret competency standards, the Australian Vocational Education Training system, and how to comply with PACI standards and procedures.

Training is ‘coaching’ oriented and designed to develop an instructor trainees teaching skills without the pressure of being assessed. The assessment phase is scheduled at a later time – and trainees are given a mandatory rest and rehearsal day before attempting their final assessment.

Typical training plan: (may vary according to complexity of specialist skills sought)

Day 1: Overview of VET system, PACI procedures, competency standards and training packages, how to prepare/plan a series of lessons, developing lesson content and sequencing a course of instruction.

Day 2: Academic (theory) lesson presentations

Day 3: Academic (theory) lesson presentations (continued), Ground training lesson preparation

Day 4: Ground training presentations

Day 5: Height training presentations

Day 6: Revision and overall appraisal of trainee performance

Day 7: Spare

Phase 5: Assessment (2 – 3 nominal days)

The assessment phase is purely evaluative and designed to determine if candidates have reached the required standard. The results of the assessment are either “competent” or “not yet competent”. Only a specially appointed *PACI Instructor Assessor* conducts the final assessment. The assessor will not have been involved with the training of the candidates.

Candidates will have already been assigned their lesson topics at the end of their instructional skills training phase. A minimum of one full rest and rehearsal day will have been scheduled before the final assessment.

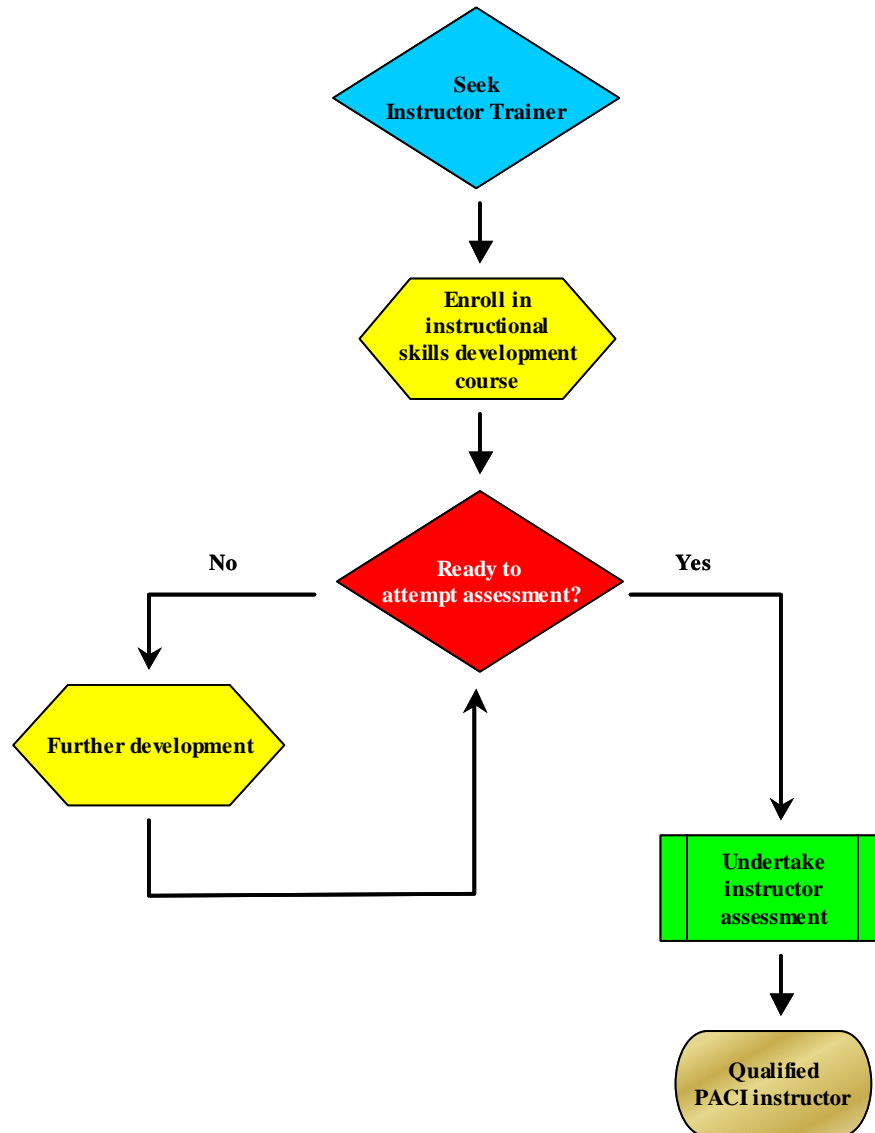
Assessment includes a written examination on the Australian VET system and DEST (formerly ANTA).

The assessor will not provide any advice or guidance during the assessment – such advice would already have been given during the training phase. The assessors job is purely to evaluate performance and decide if a candidate has reached the required standard.

If a result of “not yet competent” is recorded, the candidate will be given an opportunity to repeat the assessment process at a later date. No refunds are given to candidates who do not achieve the required standard.

Successful candidates are awarded a statement of attainment. Examples of statements are attached with this document.

The instructor training and assessment phases are illustrated in the following diagram:



Individuals who enrol in an assessment are expected to arrive fully prepared in terms of both their personal level of skill and their ability to present formal lessons to others (to the standard required by industry).

The assessor is contracted only to *assess*.

The assessor *will not* give advice or otherwise intervene during the assessment activity *unless* a potentially dangerous situation develops. In other words, the assessor will only intervene to prevent injuries or accidents from occurring.

The assessment is similar to sitting an exam at a university. At a university exam, you are not aloud to ask questions or seek the advice and assistance of others. The exam must be your own work.

If a candidate feels that s/he is not yet ready to undertake assessment, s/he should seek further training and development from a competent trainer. Training should continue until such time as the candidate is ready to attempt an assessment.

The operative word through out the assessment is ‘SHOW ME’.

The assessor *will not* discriminate on the basis of gender, race, religion, political and/or business standing. If a candidate believes that s/he was discriminated against or unfairly assessed, action can be taken against that assessor. There are severe penalties for such discriminatory behaviour.

Candidates will be assigned their lessons *at least* one (1) clear working day prior to the scheduled assessment. This will provide candidates with adequate time to prepare and rehearse their lessons.

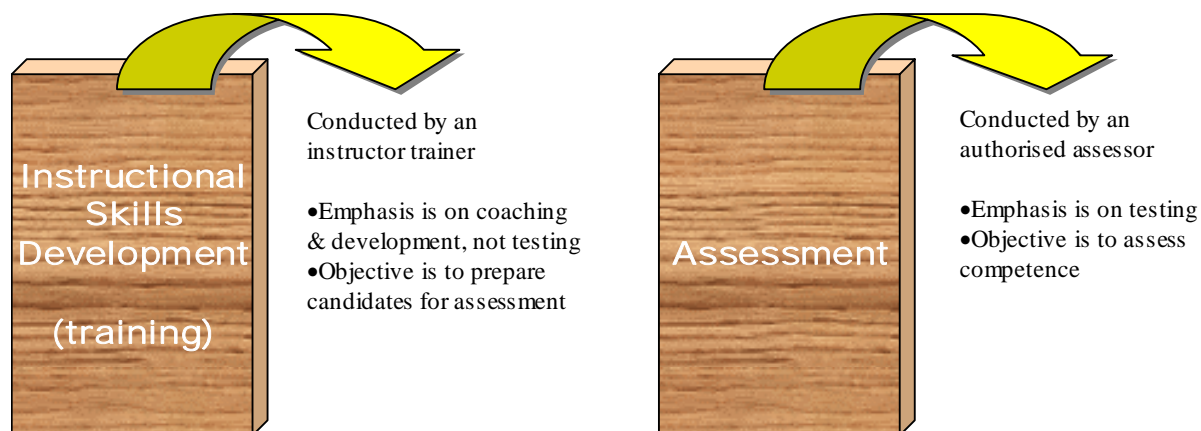
Once the assessment activities begin, the candidates *are not* permitted to seek advice or guidance from others. Questions specific to clarifying performance requirements may only be directed to the assessor – no one else.

The assessor may, on occasion, intervene during a lesson and stop the lesson if the candidate is grossly deviating from the intended subject matter or appears lost or confused (ie long periods of silence while presenting or repeatedly shuffling notes). The assessor may, in such circumstances, instruct the candidate to stop and prepare his/her assigned backup lesson (ie given a ‘second chance’). The candidate will be given a reasonable amount of time (at least one (1) hour) to re-present the backup lesson. For this reason, it is important that candidates prepare their assigned backup lessons prior to the assessment.

Candidates who read verbatim directly from their lesson plan (without attempting to make eye contact with their class) will be assessed as ‘not yet competent’. Occasional glances at lesson plans are permitted particularly when complex information must be accurately conveyed.

Candidates should clarify their questions and concerns with their assessor **BEFORE** the assessment begins.

The following diagram illustrates the difference between the instructional skills development phase and the final assessment phase:



PERSONAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Candidates must be able to demonstrate various abseiling and/or climbing skills to a level sufficient to facilitate student learning. An instructor *must* be able to demonstrate the skills being taught to a degree *equal to or better than* at the current level being taught. The skill may be demonstrated as part of your ground training presentation or at height at the discretion of the assessor and as relevant to the lesson material being taught.

A candidates skill performance will be measured according to the following criteria:

SCORE	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
5	Demonstration quality	Suitable for recording on video tape as an example to others: <input type="checkbox"/> performed to demonstration quality <input type="checkbox"/> calm, controlled and fluid manner (anxiety level is low) <input type="checkbox"/> performed without any observable problems or difficulties <input type="checkbox"/> precision is evident
4	Exceeded assessment criteria	High degree of control and capability: <input type="checkbox"/> lacked the fluidity and demonstration quality of a 5 <input type="checkbox"/> skill performed too quickly <input type="checkbox"/> skill not broken into easily observable segments (stages)
3	Competent	Denotes a performance that would be expected of an average person (ie in common law - the ' <i>reasonable person</i> '). <input type="checkbox"/> no significant problems observed
2	Not yet competent	Skill was eventually successfully completed: <input type="checkbox"/> significant errors and/or problems occurred <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated attempts may have been required and the anxiety level is usually, though not necessarily, high
1	Re-training required	Competence could not be inferred: <input type="checkbox"/> unable to complete the skill <input type="checkbox"/> performance was clearly poor. Students who receive this score should be required to practice and repeat the skill(s) at a later time or undergo remedial training.

A score of at least three (3) is required – which coincides with a result of 'competent'